

INDICTS SEVEN FOR THE SLOCUM WRECK

Federal Grand Jury Charges Capt. Van Schaick and Inspectors Fleming and Lundberg with Criminal Negligence and Holds Officers of Company.

CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE.

CAPT. VAN SCHAICK, of the steamboat Slocum. JOHN J. FLEMING, United States Inspector. HENRY LUNDBERG, United States Inspector.

CHARGED WITH AIDING AND ABETTING.

FRANK A. BARNABY, President Knickerbocker Steamboat Co. JAMES K. ATKINSON, Secretary. P. E. DEXTER, Treasurer. CAPT. PEASE, Commodore of the Fleet.

Seven indictments were returned by the Federal Grand Jury this afternoon against the officers of the Slocum, United States Inspectors and the officers and directors of the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company.

True bills were brought against Capt. Van Schaick, U. S. Steamboat Inspectors Lundberg and Fleming on the charge of criminal negligence. President Barnaby, Secretary Atkinson and Treasurer Dexter and Capt. Pease, commodore of the fleet, were indicted for aiding and abetting in violation of the statute under which all bills were found.

LAWYERS ON HAND EARLY.

The Grand Jury handed in a batch of indictments that numbered almost one hundred. In the pile of papers were the indictments against the men involved in the Slocum disaster, and they were guarded from the public view. The officers of the Knickerbocker Steamboat Company were all represented by counsel, as well as the three men indicted on what is practically a manslaughter charge.

The Grand Jury reported to Judge Thomas, in the United States Court, after having deliberated two hours. They had gone over the testimony presented by United States District Attorney Burnett, and it seemed that the minds of the jurymen were pretty well made up by the time they appeared for presentation of the bills.

MANSLAUGHTER, SAYS THE LAW.

Mr. Burnett says the indictments were all brought in view of the violation of the law as stated in section No. 5344 of the United States Revised Statutes. This reads:

Every captain, engineer, pilot or other person employed on any steamboat or vessel, by whose misconduct, negligence or inattention to duties on such vessel, the life of any person is destroyed, and every owner, inspector or any other public officer, through whose fraud, connivance, misconduct or violation of law, the life of any person is destroyed, shall be deemed guilty of manslaughter and upon conviction thereof before any Circuit Court of the United States, shall be sentenced to confinement at hard labor for a period of not more than ten years.

The two inspectors and the captain of the Slocum were directly charged with just such negligence and inattention to duties which brought about the appalling loss of life on the steamboat.

The lawyers evidently expected the indictments and offered to surrender their clients at any time to save the annoyance of arrest. The United States District Attorney asked for the issuance of the warrants, but it is hardly likely that they will be served. Some of the men indicted are already under heavy bail. Judge Dittenhoeffer and Mr. McManus suggested that bail be fixed at once for their clients, but this Judge Thomas refused to do, saying that it would be necessary for him to study the indictments closely, getting an estimate of the gravity of the crime before fixing the amount of bail.

According to the lawyers for the defense Capt. Van Schaick, Inspectors Lundberg, Fleming and the other defendants will all be in court Monday morning prepared to give bail and answer to the indictments.

It is said that Mr. Barnett will ask that bail amounting to \$25,000 shall be required in each case.

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